

Message Text

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ACTION VO-03

INFO OCT-01 EA-07 ISO-00 CIAE-00 FBIE-00 INSE-00 NSAE-00

SCA-01 /012 W

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R 060335Z DEC 76

FM AMCONSUL HONG KONG

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2944

INFO AMEMBASSY TAIPEI

C O N F I D E N T I A L HONG KONG 14094

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: SREF

SUBJECT: VISA FRAUD INVESTIGATIONS

REF: 1) HONG KONG 12976 2. TAIPEI 7431 3. STATE 273342

1. POON AND WIFE INTERVIEWED AT INDEPENDENT COMMISSION AGENT CORRUPTION (ICAC) HEADQUARTERS NOVEMBER 17 WHERE CONOFF REVOKED THEIR US VISAS PER 22 CFR 41.134 AND SECTION 214 (B) OF ACT.

2. ICAC INVESTIGATION THUS FAR UNABLE TO DEFINATELY LINK POON TO ANY OF VARIOUS FRADU/MALFEASANCE PROBES PRESENTLY UNDER WAY (SEE HONG KONG 14045). PAIR HOLDING TO CLAIM THAT PERSONAL FUNDS (NOW ESTIMATE AT US\$48,400 PLUS ADDITIONAL \$42,000 IN NEGOTIABLE INSTRUMENTS) ACQUIRED AS RESULT OF WIFE'S EMPLOYMENT AT LOCAL NIGHT CLUB. THIS EXPLANATION DOESN'T JIBE WITH FACT THAT MRS. POON CLAIMED INCOME OF ONLY \$600 MONTHLY DURING THAT PERIOD. AS RESULT ICAC BELIEVES PROSECUTION FOR TAXES EVASION LIKELY.

3. TO DATE ICAC/RSO INVESTIGATION ON INTERNAL MALFEASANCE INVOLVING AT LEAST 180 NIV CASES EITHER FRAUDULENTLY DOCUMENTED OR WHERE UNATUORIZED VISA ISSUED. THIS TWO-PRONEGED ICAC/RSO INVESTIGATION IS SEEKING TO CONNECT ACTIVITES OF POON AND /OR OTHER CONSULATE EMPLOYEES TO THOSE OF CHENG TIN FUNG (SEE HONG KONG 12216 PARA 10).

4. INFORMATION DEVELOPED DECEMBER 2, HOWEVER, MAY BORDEN SCOPE OF ICAC INVESTIGATION. CONGEN NHK/INS SOURCE INFORMS
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US THAT COUNTERFIET PASSPORT/VISA RING CENTERED IN TAIWAN

HAS BROUGHT CERTAIN NHK IMMIGRATION OFFICERS AT KAI TAK AIRPORT TO ASSURE THEIR "CLIENTS" ARE SAFELY CLEARED THRU NHK IMMIGRATION WHEN DEPARTING NHK FOR US. IF TRUE, THIS INFORMATION COULD BRING ICAC INTO COUNTERFEIT DOCUMENT INVESTIGATION PRESENTLY STALLED WITH COMMERCIAL CRIME UNIT OF NHK POLICE. BRINGING INTO PLAY SUBSTANTIAL ICA FINANCIAL AND MANPOWER RESOURCES ALONG WITH ITS WIDENING INVESTIGATION AUTHORITY COULD HAVE MAJOR EFFECT ON OVERALL HKG EFFORTS TO COMBAT ILLEGAL IMMIGRATION.

5. IN VIEW OF THE POSSIBILITY THAT FRAUD, MALFEASANCE AND COUNTERFEITING HERE MAY PROVE TO BE MORE EXTENSIVE THAN INITIALLY SUSPECTED, ICAC OFFICIALS CALLED ON CONSUL GENERAL NOVEMBER 26 TO SEEK ASSURANCE WE WOULD CONTINUE TO COOPERATE IN INVESTIGATION AND ALLOW CONGEN OFFICERS TO TESTIFY FOR PROSECUTION IF REQUESTED. ICAC'S CONCERN WAS THAT CONGEN OR USG MIGHT AT SOME POINT SEEK TO STOP THE INVESTIGATION RATHER THAN FACE POSSIBLE EMBARRASSMENT OF HAVING EVIDENCE SURFACE IN COURT. CONSUL GENERAL MADE CLEAR WE WANTED INVESTIGATION CONTINUED AND WOULD COOPERATE IN ANY PROSECUTION. HE ADDED THAT ALTHOUGH DEPT'S APPROVAL NECESSARY BEFORE CONGEN OFFICERS COULD TESTIFY IN COURT, HE HAD NO DOUBT SUCH APPROVAL WOULD BE FORTHCOMING IN RESPONSE HIS STRONG RECOMMENDATION.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: VISA FRAUD
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 06 DEC 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: coburnhl
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976HONGK14094
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760449-1238
From: HONG KONG
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19761270/aaaacire.tel
Line Count: 86
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION VO
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 76 HONG KONG 12976
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: coburnhl
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 26 MAY 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <26 MAY 2004 by BoyleJA>; APPROVED <16 SEP 2004 by coburnhl>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: VISA FRAUD INVESTIGATIONS
TAGS: SREF, (POON, CHEUNG SHING), (POON, JOE)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006